

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-10 remained in this application. Claim 1 has been amended herein. New claims 11-15 have been added.

1. Claim Objections

Claims 1 is objected to because of certain informalities. Applicant's have amended claim 1 to overcome this objection, as follows: Claim 1, step (d), has been amended to replace "with" with --having--. Accordingly, it is believed the objection should now be withdrawn.

2. Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 1, 9 & 10 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chalasani et al., hereinafter "Chalasani" (US Pat. 6,080,345).

Respectfully, the rejection is traversed. Chalasani is directed to a method of forming a plasticized batch wherein a non-solvent is added to the inorganic batch for the purpose of improving wet green and fired A-axis strength. There is no teaching or suggestion in Chalasani to produce an alumina-silica structure having high surface area, i.e., greater than $180 \text{ m}^2/\text{gm}$. Simply, one of ordinary skill in the art would not look to Chalasani for the way to produce a high surface area catalyst support. More particularly, the alumina sources taught in Chalasani are alpha aluminas, while the acids are weak fatty acids. The combination of such low-surface-area aluminas with such weak acids would result in very low surface area structures, probably having surface areas lower than $20 \text{ m}^2/\text{gm}$. Additionally, there is no teaching in Chalasani to use a high percentage of alumina to produce the 75-98% alumina on an oxide basis in the final composition. The aluminosilicates specifically taught in Chalasani are mullite and cordierite having 72% and 30-40% alumina on an oxide basis, respectively. As such, Chalasani does not teach or suggest a high alumina body (>75% alumina) nor a high surface area body. Accordingly, Chalasani does not render the claimed invention obvious and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-8 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chalasani et al., hereinafter "Chalasani", (US Pat. 6,080,345), as applied to claims 1, 9 & 10 above, and further in view of Jaffe (US Pat. 4,289,653). Chalasani is not combinable with Jaffe. Specifically, for the reasons given above, Chalasani is directed to an entirely different material, i.e., a low surface area alumina material. Further there is no specific teaching of high alumina content structures (>75% alumina) is provided in Chalasani. Moreover, Jaffe does not teach the use of a binder. Accordingly, a person of ordinary skill in the art combining the teachings of Chalasani and Jaffe would not arrive at the claimed invention. Accordingly, the obviousness rejection should be withdrawn.

4. New Claims

New claims 11-15 are added herein. Claims 11-15 are allowable for at least the reasons given for claim 1. Claims 11-15 are dependent on a believed allowable claim and are, therefore, also allowable.

5. Prior Art Made of Record

The prior art of record cited and not relied upon by the Examiner is no more material to the pending claims than the reference relied upon by Examiner.

6. Conclusion

Based upon the above amendments, remarks, and papers of records, Applicants believe the pending claims of the above-captioned application are in allowable form and patentable over the prior art of record. Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Applicants believe that a one (1) month extension of time is necessary to make this Reply timely. Should Applicants be in error, Applicants respectfully request that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorizes the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Please direct any questions or comments to Randall S. Wayland at 607-974-0463.

Respectfully submitted,

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